



Southern Plantation Records

Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War

Joan E. Healey, Research Specialist, AG

FamilySearch
healeyje@familysearch.org

The Family History Library has acquired the collection: *Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War*. By University Publications of America. The collection consists of 1213 microfilm reels and includes records organized in series (A-N) of finding aid of microfiche edition of the same name. (FHL 975 H2s, and H6s, H6sm Series A-N) in U.S. and Canada Reference area.

Ante-Bellum: before the war; existing before the Civil War

The collection of plantation records contains unique records of the plantation owner and often his descendants that may connect an individual to his or her family.

A research foundation must be built on research and documentation of the African American Individual and his or her extended family from the present back to 1870, and the slave owner name and the place where the slave and the owner lived.

Before using this collection a research foundation must be built on research and documentation of the African American individual and his or her extended family. The name of the plantation, and the name of the slave owner must be known.

WHERE DID THE PLANTATION RECORDS COME FROM?

- Original plantation owner's records were acquired by descendants, who donated them to Libraries and Universities.
- Collection of manuscripts held in several major research libraries throughout the South
- Gathered and became:
- Published by University Publication of America (UPA)

Major Libraries: South Carolinian Library, University of South Carolina , South Carolina Historical Society, **Library of Congress**, Maryland Historical Society, University of Virginia Library, Duke University Library, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin, Howard-Tilton Library at Tulane University, and the Louisiana State Museum, Louisiana State University, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Shirley Plantation Collection, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Earl Gregg Swem Library, The College of William and Mary, Virginia Historical Society, Mississippi Department of Archives and History

TYPE OF RECORDS FOUND IN THE COLLECTION

Personal Papers: journals, diaries, correspondence (personal, social and business), genealogy, photographs and recipes, **financial records** account books, inventories, (bills and receipts), **land and property**, crop and livestock records, land plats and surveys, Plantation record books, taxes, will and estate papers, speeches, purchase of Slaves and merchandise, social activities, family records, Bible records, List of Slave, Slaves for hire, Slave auction books, Overseers journals and more

Search Records: Location, Time Period, and Do a Community Search

Community Search: a search for people living and interacting in a common location, or activities

- Search the entire city, county for your surname- place in family groups and in social groups; by: ages (generational), birthplace, occupation
- Search for all individuals in the same town with the same surname
- Search for all known surnames and family members
- Search for neighbors

When the results of a search for records by location, time period and community reveal or give a slave owner's name; the search grows to include searching for the records of the slave owner and his family.

PLANTATION RECORDS OF HENRY TOOLE CLARK

Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantation from the Revolution through the Civil War

Series F-3 Plantation Records

Who was Henry Toole Clark? – Born 1808 – 1874; Business interest and land rental North Carolina, Alabama, and Tennessee. Governor of North Carolina 1861-1862 [Google Search](#)

Sample Documents:

- Slaves/ Negroes of James W. Clark, (father of Henry T. Clark) brought to Sumter County, Alabama in May 1835
- Hire of Negroes years 1835-1836
- Hire of Negroes for 1839, 1842
- Sale of Slaves 1849
- Hire of Negroes 1857 and 1858
- Cumulative account of Hires
- **Contract** for Hire 1867 and 1866 / 9 (note years are after the Civil War 1861-1865)

FINDING THE SLAVE OWNER AND HIS FAMILY

Sample documents:

- 1850 Census
- 1850 Slave Schedule- Alabama, and North Carolina
- 1860 Census
- 1860 Slave Schedule – Alabama, and North Carolina
- 1870 Census

This was a very brief search, additional research is needed. Search should be done in the records (census, cemetery, church, land and property, military, vital, will and probate, all record types) of Edgecombe County, North Carolina, and Sumter County, Alabama

RESEARCH AIDS FOR USING THE COLLECTION

A Genealogical Index to the Guides of Microfilm Editions of Records of Ante-Bellum Southern Plantations from the Revolution through the Civil War. By Jean L. Cooper FHL Book: 973 D22cj. Located in the U.S. and Canada Reference area.

The book has six sections:

1. Location index - alphabetical County and City
2. Location index - alphabetical by State
3. Plantation index – alphabetical by Name of Plantation
4. Plantation index – alphabetical by State
5. Surname index – alphabetical by Surname
6. Surname index – alphabetical by State

Notebook Maps

United States: maps marked indicating available plantation records in states

State: state maps, counties marked indicating some plantation records available

VALUE OF THE PLANTATION RECORDS

The extensive time period they cover before 1776-1865 and after

Variety of records involving slaves and their owner

AVAILABILITY OF THE COLLECTION

This collection has not yet be indexed or digitized. The organization of the records when filmed is a bit haphazard. See page one: Where did the Records Come From?

Available at:

- Family History Library and Centers
- Fort Wayne, Indiana
- Library of Virginia – Richmond, Virginia
- Libraries where originals are housed.

Online Resources for African American Research

Library of Virginia

guides.lib.virginia.edu/microformsouthernplantations

Allen County Library, Ft. Wayne IN

<http://genealogycenter.org/Home.aspx>

FamilySearch Historical Records:

familysearch.org/search/collection/list

FamilySearch Research Wiki:

familysearchwiki.org (article and reference aid)

Challenges of the Records

Searching the plantation records requires

- Time and patience
- The documents are not number or paged
- They may be in a general chronological order
- Documents filmed right next to each other may not relate and be two very different subjects
- The records are not indexed
- Before filming the records had some deterioration

Other Unique African American Collections

- Bureau of Refugees Freedmen and Abandoned Land: Page at: FamilySearch Research Wiki
- Southern Claim Commission: Page at: FamilySearch Research Wiki

- *Records of the Southern Plantations from Emancipation to the Great Migration*. By University Publication of American. (Great Migration: leaving South 1910-1930 and 1940-1970. New great migration: 1965-present a return to the South)

Available at:

Library of Virginia and Fort Wayne, Indiana